greater pleasure because he was a law student in my office, and I venture the opinion that besides learning law he may have learned the way to manage and win elections.

We are met here, honourable members of the Senate, at this early hour of the autumn, to discuss the trade agreements that were laid before us last evening. It is needless for me to state what has been the policy of the Liberal Party in the matter of tariff enactments. We have always favoured a moderate tariff, believing that it would help to reduce the cost of living for the people of the country. Liberalism in economics expands trade abroad, and through competition at home reduces the cost of living; and while I have not studied the present agreements very minutely up to this moment, to the extent that they tend in that direction I heartily give them my approval.

I have said that the Liberal policy has always tended to have a moderating influence in tariff matters. The preference granted to Great Britain by the Laurier-Fielding Government had for its main object the implementing of the programme of the Liberal Party as decided upon at the Conference of 1893. The reduction that we granted to British goods not only helped to reduce the cost of those goods to the consumer in Canada, but at the same time helped to reduce the price of commodities imported from other countries, because it had to come down to a proper level in order that such goods might enter and compete in our market. We could not at that time think of asking Great Britain for any preferential treatment. For many years Great Britain maintained the policy of the open door, and we had free entry into that country. At all the Imperial Conferences that followed, however, Canada's stand was that if ever Great Britain was disposed to alter her fiscal policy we should then have a preference in her market.

At the Conference of 1902 Mr. Joseph Chamberlain stressed the advantages of the Dominions going a little further in the preferences that they were giving to Great Britain, and Mr. Fielding answered that Canada would be disposed to do more if she were given a preference by Great Britain. We all know that during the South African War an impost of one shilling per quarter on wheat and flour was fixed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. At the Conference of 1902 Sir Wilfrid Laurier asked that this duty should be continued and extended to other farm products, and stated that under such conditions Canada would be disposed to increase her preference to Britain. Not only was the

request for an extension of the duty refused, but hardly had the Conference dissolved when the shilling impost was dropped.

In 1902 Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was starting on his campaign for fair trade, that is, for some duty which would protect the British market and at the same time give a preference to the Dominions. In 1906 he went to the people of Great Britain on that very question: their answer was a decided negative. As I read the discussions that took place at the various conferences that followed, the matter was brought up in every phase at every meeting of representatives of the Dominions and of Great Britain. Then the War of 1914 intervened. The situation seemed to be altering in a way that would be agreeable to the Dominions. At the Conference of 1923 there was a ray of hope that Great Britain would do something towards granting them a preference. Mr. Baldwin was inclined to extend the McKenna duties. Our representatives at that Conference were the then Prime Minister, the Right Hon. Mr. Mackenzie King, my right honourable friend to my left (Right Hon. Mr. Graham) and Sir Lomer Gouin. The stand they took is illustrated in the correspondence, which was published by order of Parliament in 1924 as Sessional Paper 111.

On October 23, 1923, the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Canadian delegation, wrote to Sir Philip Lloyd-Greame, President of the Board of Trade, as follows:

My dear Sir Philip,—My colleagues and I have been considering with care the proposals as to preferential duties put forward by the Government of Great Britain at the meeting of the Conference on October 9, and which I discussed with you in our conversation at the Board of Trade on Saturday morning.

These proposals, which it was observed were within the framework of the existing fiscal system of Great Britain, will, we believe, be received in Canada with due appreciation as of distinct value to Dominion producers.

On two subsidiary phases of these proposals, questions have been put for consideration by the Dominion representatives:

(1) The duty on "other dried fruit" is proposed to be imposed on "such fruit, e.g., apples, pears, and peaches, as the Dominion representatives may consider of interest to their trade." The dried fruits suggested, in addition to those already included, appear to comprise those in which our producers are chiefly interested.

(2) As to tobacco, two alternative proposals are made, stabilization of the existing duty over a term of years, or an increase of the preference from one-sixth to one-fourth. An increase of the preference would, in our belief, present most in the way of advantage to the producers of tobacco in Canada. As to the course which the British Government and Parliament should follow, we would not venture to express an opinion.

More important are the general issues raised in the statements made by yourself in your